

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15

/058 W

----- 077341

R 301333Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2966

INFO AMEMBSSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GE, GW

SUBJECT: MORE EAST GERMANS SEEK TO EMIGRATE TO THE FRG.

1. OFFICIALS IN THE FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATION IN EAST BERLIN HAVE EXPRESSED GROWING CONCERN OVER THE INCREASIVNG NUMBERS OF GDR CITIZENS APPEARING AT THE REPRESENTATION TO INQUIRE ABOUT LEGAL EMIGRATION TO THE FRG. FRG OFFICIALS HAVE REGISTERED A STEADY INCREASE IN SUCH INQUIRIES SINCE MARCH, 1976, AND REPORT THAT UP TO 70 EAST GERMANS PER DAY ARE NOW COMING TO THE REPRESENTATION TO INQUIRE ABOUT LEAVING THE GDR, ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THEM WITH FAMILY TIES IN THE FRG. FRG SOURCES NOTE THAT SUCH INQUIRIES INCREASED DURING

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THE SUMMER MONTHS OF 1975 AS WELL, BUT THEN ONLY TO

A MAXIMUM OF 40 PER DAY. THEY REPORT A BROAD SPECTRUM OF GDR CITIZENRY AMONG THE INQUIRERS, INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS.

2. IN SEEKING TO EXPLAIN THIS INCREASE, FRG OFFICIALS MENTION THE FACT THAT MANY GDR VISITORS REFER TO A RUMOR CURRENT IN THE GDR TO THE EFFECT THAT NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO APPLY FOR AN EXIT PERMIT SINCE GDR EMIGRATION POLICY COULD SOON TOUGHEN UP DUE TO ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES AND AS A RESULT OF THE FRG ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER. FRG OFFICIALS ARE CONCERNED THAT STEADILY RISING GDR EXIT APPLICATIONS MAY JEOPARDIZE THE SUCCESSES ACHIEVED IN 1975 WHEN THE GDR ISSUED OVER 10,000 PERMITS FOR EMIGRATION TO THE FRG UNDER THE RUBRIC OF "FAMILY REUNIFICATION" WHEN IN FACT ONLY ABOUT HALF OF THOSE GDR CITIZENS RECEIVING SUCH PERMITS ACTUALLY HAD FAMILY TIES IN THE WEST. FRG OFFICIALS ARE ALSO CONCERNED LEST THE GDR BE MOVED AT SOME POINT TO CHANGE ITS POLICY OF ALLOWING UNCONTROLLED PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE FRG REPRESENTATION IN EAST BERLIN.

3. AS OF NOW, FRG SOURCES DO NOT FORESEE A GENERAL GDR TOUGHENING UP ON EMIGRATION TO THE FRG, BUT BELIEVE A "WAVE PATTERN" MAY DEVELOP IN WHICH PERIODS OF RELATIVELY LIBERAL GDR EMIGRATION POLICY ALTERNATE WITH MORE RESTRICTIVE ONES. THEY VIEW THE MOUNTING EMIGRATION APPLICATIONS WITH CONCERN, HOWEVER, AND ARE WAITING TO SEE WHETHER AUTUMN WILL BRING A SLACKENING OFF.

4. FRG OFFICIALS NOTE THAT THE SITUATION HAS BEGUN TO RECEIVE PUBLICITY IN THE WEST GERMAN PRESS AND FEAR THAT THIS MAY ACCENTUATE THE PROBLEM AS GDR CITIZENS LEARN OF THE SITUATION THROUGH FRG MEDIA. A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE SUEDEDETSCHER ZEITUNG, FOR EXAMPLE, REPORTED THAT THE "FLOOD OF (EXIT) APPLICATIONS" HAD BECOME A CRITICAL PROBLEM FOR THE GDR GOVERNMENT AND THAT INCREASING NUMBERS OF GDR CITIZENS WERE BASING THEIR DESIRE TO LEAVE THE GDR ON REFERENCE TO THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT. FRG OFFICIALS IN EAST BERLIN REPORT A SIMILAR TREND AMONG THE GDR APPLICANTS, AND BELIEVE THE GDR MAY BE HAVING CONTINUED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DIFFICULTIES COUNTERING POPULAR EXPECTATIONS THAT RESULTED FROM CSCE CONFERENCE.

5. COMMENT: FRG SOURCES CAUTION AGAINST TAKING AN ALARMIST VIEW OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND BELIEVE THE NUMBER OF GDR EMIGRATION APPLICANTS WILL SLACKEN OFF BY SEPTEMBER. HOWEVER, THEY CALL THE PROBLEM A SENSITIVE ONE FOR THE GDR THAT BEARS CAREFUL WATCHING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, POLICIES, EXIT PERMITS, EMIGRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BERLIN06361
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760295-1001
From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976076/aaaaaexx.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <04 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MORE EAST GERMANS SEEK TO EMIGRATE TO THE FRG.
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GC, GE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006